



CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

THE PRESIDENT'S DAILY BRIEF



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1 AUGUST 1966

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1. South Vietnam

Ky and his government seem to be handling preparations for the September constitutional assembly elections effectively and honestly.

Functionaries in charge of the electoral process have apparently tried hard to avoid irregularities that might foster international criticism. Furthermore, some of the Saigon generals--including Ky himself--have gone out of their way to correct those irregularities brought to their attention.

The government has further tried to create an impartial atmosphere by allowing a committee of the 79-man Civilian-Military Council to take a hand in supervising the electoral machinery. The Council recently reinstated a few candidates disqualified by local screening boards.

Today, the government kicked off a three-day seminar for province chiefs and other officials concerned with running the elections. Ky again stressed the importance of adequate preparation and complete honesty.

2. Cambodia

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3. Soviet Union

The Soviets are continuing to strengthen their military forces gradually in areas adjacent to the Sinkiang border of China.

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Also, there are some indications [REDACTED] that an advance element of a motorized division may have recently deployed to the area.

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4. Soviet Union

The Soviet Union's parliament, the Supreme Soviet, convenes tomorrow. There are new straws in the wind that the session may bring about some changes in the Soviet Government. The party Central Committee, which would have to put its stamp on any important change, met today on matters relating to the Supreme Soviet session.

Rumors have been floating around Moscow for the past few days that Kosygin is to resign for reasons of health. This could be, although we have seen no evidence that he is sick. His recent grueling work schedule points to no preparations for phasing out.

On balance, there is simply not enough evidence to forecast Kosygin's departure. The changes that do take place, however, could include a promotion to deputy premier for Foreign Minister Gromyko.

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5. Nigeria

Lieutenant Colonel Yakubu Gowon, 32-year-old army chief of staff, has taken over as head of state. Gowon, a northerner, made the announcement today in a brief broadcast following talks with the ranking remnant of the Ironsi regime.

Just prior to his takeover, Gowon was talking in favor of northern secession and this may still be his intention. He expressed a strong reluctance to face up to the "impossible task and risk of trying to unify a country that just will not be unified."

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As for the army, the US defense attaché reports that it has ceased to exist as a cohesive organization. Northerners control the bulk of what is left, but even this does not give them the power to impose their will on the rest of the country.

6. Congo

The Congo's relations with Belgium will deteriorate further if, as seems likely, the central government expels the Belgian consul in Lubumbashi (Elisabethville).

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7. France

Paris now says it will end payments to most NATO programs after the first of the year. It still says, however, that it would like to continue taking part in selected programs in which it has particular interest. This unilateral French pronouncement will strengthen the hand of those of the Fourteen who are reluctant to permit France to pick and choose its projects.

8. Brazil

Terrorist incidents in various cities have the public on edge. More violence has followed hard upon the fatal bombings in Recife a week ago. The US Embassy office in Brasilia and some private US companies have received anonymous bomb threats.

Contributing to the general jumpiness is the fact that no one seems to know whether the incidents are the work of Communists or violent protests against the Castello Branco government,

The series of elections scheduled for this fall already has political temperatures on the rise. The only legal opposition party, hurt badly by recent governmental decrees favoring progovernment candidates, is now debating whether or not to take part at all.

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